# Fall Turkey Hunter Questionnaire 2002

By Jessica Kitchell

#### **Abstract**

Approximately 72% of all fall turkey hunters receiving a harvest permit hunted turkeys during the 2002 fall turkey season. The success rate for active hunters was 27.1%. Statewide, the average number of days spent hunting for fall turkeys was 3.8; hunting pressure was highest on weekends. Most turkeys were harvested from the southwestern region of the state. The most commonly used method of hunting fall turkeys was ambushing from concealment. Most hunters (60.9%) would like to see the number of available permits for hunting turkeys within the zone they hunted to remain unchanged. Most hunters (73.7%) felt the number of turkeys in the zone they hunted increased or stayed the same compared to the previous year. Overall satisfaction with the Wisconsin Wild Turkey Program remained high.

#### <u>Methods</u>

A sample of fall turkey hunter names and addresses was drawn from the current fall turkey hunter permit file. A survey was mailed to 6,000 fall turkey hunters after the completion of the fall turkey season. The questionnaire was mailed in proportion to the number of permits distributed in each zone. The questionnaire asked each hunter specific questions about their fall turkey hunting experience (Figure 1). A second mailing was made to 3,000 of the non-respondents. Data from all returned questionnaires were entered into the DNR UNIX computer program and summarized using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS). The current fall turkey hunting zones were also grouped into regional areas (Figure 2). The regions were created from zones that had similar turkey populations, hunter densities, and habitat. These regions were created so that responses could be pooled to increase the response rates in some of the less hunted zones.

#### Results

A total of 3,837 fall turkey hunter surveys were returned. Duplicate returns numbered 57. The corrected response rate was 64.0%. Approximately thirty percent (29.2%) of respondents had attended a turkey hunter education clinic sponsored by the WDNR or the National Wild Turkey Federation (Table 1, Question 1). Approximately 70% of respondents have fewer than 5 years fall turkey hunting experience; 23% had between 6 and 10 years experience; 6% had between 11 and 15 years hunting experience, and only 1% had 16 or more years of experience (Table 1, Question 2).

Statewide, 72.3% of the respondents hunted turkeys this fall (Table 1, Question 3). The fall turkey harvest registration data success rate (14.6%) is uncorrected for nonhunters and is probably a low estimate.

Fall turkey hunters were asked to report the days on which they hunted for turkeys during the 2002 season. Hunting pressure was high on the weekends, with 60% of days in the field being a Saturday or Sunday (Table 1, Question 4). Statewide, the average number of days spent hunting for fall turkeys was 3.8.

Statewide, 27.1% of the respondents harvested a turkey this fall; 648 harvested 1 turkey, and 86 harvested 2 turkeys (Table 1, Question 5). This success rate may be high because hunters who were successful may have been more likely to return the survey than hunters who were unsuccessful. Successful hunters were asked how many hours it took to kill a turkey; the most frequent (35.2%) response was 1-3 hours (Table 1, Question 5a). Active hunters were asked if they hit any turkeys they were unable to retrieve; 3.1% were unable to find their bird. Thirteen hunters reported hitting 2 or more birds (Table 1, Question 6).

Hunters were asked what weapon they used most, and what weapon they used to kill their turkey. Approximately eighty-three percent (83.4%) of respondents who hunted said that they used a gun to hunt fall turkeys, while 96.1% said that they used a gun to harvest a fall turkey (Table 1, Question 7).

The most commonly used method to hunt fall turkeys was ambushing from concealment (32.5%; Table 1, Question 8). Still hunting/stalking was the next most commonly used hunting method (31.0%). Incidental to other hunting was the least utilized hunting method (0.8%). The mean number of turkeys seen by hunters afield while hunting was 27.1 (Table 1, Question 9).

The percentage of survey respondents who reported the presence of other hunters interfering with their fall turkey hunting was 11.6%. Respondents reported archery deer hunters as causing the most interference (Table 1, Question 10). The second and third most common source of interference was small game hunters and other turkey hunters, respectively.

Just over one-eighth (12.6%) responded to "other hunters kept me from hunting where I wanted to" with 'definitely yes,' or 'somewhat.' Similarly, 7.7% of respondents answered "there was too much competition from other hunters where I hunted" with 'definitely yes,' or 'somewhat.' Only 8.6% of the respondents indicated that other hunters interfered with their chance to bag a bird (Table 1, Question 11).

The number of hunters who rated their hunting experience as "Fairly High" or "Very High" was 33.6%. This was greater than the hunters who rated their hunt as "Fairly Low" or "Very Low", 20.8% (Table 1, Question 12).

Hunters were asked to rate several factors that influenced their perception of a "quality" fall turkey hunt. They were asked to rate seven factors on a scale of one to seven, one having the most influence and seven having the least. The most important factor leading to a "quality" turkey hunt was seeing turkeys. The next most important factor was an opportunity to kill a turkey. The least important factor was weather (Table 1, Question 13).

Most hunters (60.9%) would like to see the number of permits available in the zone they hunted remain unchanged, while 36.3% would like to see the number of permits increased (Table 1, Question 14). Most hunters (73.7%) felt the number of turkeys in the zone they hunted increased or stayed the same from the year before (Table 1, Question 15).

Respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the Wisconsin Wild Turkey Program. Over 60% responded as 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied,' and 30% responded as 'satisfied.' Only 7.9% responded as 'somewhat dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' (Table 1 Question 16).

**Table 1**. Responses to the 2002 Fall Turkey Hunter Questionnaire.

1. Have you ever attended a turkey hunter education clinic sponsored by the Wisconsin DNR and/or the National Wild Turkey Federation? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	26.1	27.9	23.1	29.6	32.4	32.6	29.2
No	73.7	71.8	76.9	70.2	67.7	67.4	70.7

2. How many years of fall turkey hunting experience do you have? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
0-5	76.5	75.7	86.4	72.3	74.9	54.7	70.2
6-10	17.5	20.0	11.7	22.7	18.2	32.7	22.8
11-15	5.3	3.8	1.2	3.5	6.3	9.9	5.6
16+	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.5	0.7	2.7	1.4

3. Did you hunt turkeys this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	77.6	68.1	79.2	72.0	72.8	70.5	72.3
No	22.1	31.9	20.8	27.9	27.2	29.5	27.6

4. Please check all the days that you hunted for turkeys this fall: (Percent)

Date <sup>a</sup>	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Oct 12, 2002	6.6	6.6	6.2	5.5	6.4	7.0	6.4
Oct 13, 2002	6.0	6.2	5.4	5.2	5.1	6.0	5.7
Oct 14, 2002	2.1	2.0	1.7	2.1	2.3	1.6	1.9
Oct 15, 2002	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.6
Oct 16, 2002	2.0	1.7	2.3	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.8
Oct 17, 2002	1.8	1.6	1.8	1.5	1.2	1.6	1.6
Oct 18, 2002	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.2	2.7	2.8	2.6
Oct 19, 2002	5.8	6.6	6.5	5.7	6.2	6.9	6.3
Oct 20, 2002	5.2	5.5	5.6	5.0	5.4	6.0	5.5
Oct 21, 2002	1.6	1.2	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.5
Oct 22, 2002	1.2	1.4	1.7	1.6	1.2	1.5	1.5
Oct 23, 2002	1.9	1.6	2.2	2.0	1.6	1.7	1.8
Oct 24, 2002	2.3	1.8	2.0	1.9	1.8	2.1	2.0
Oct 25, 2002	2.4	3.3	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1	2.9
Oct 26, 2002	6.8	7.3	7.6	6.5	6.1	6.9	6.9
Oct 27, 2002	5.3	5.7	5.6	5.1	4.6	5.1	5.3
Oct 28, 2002	1.2	1.5	1.0	1.6	1.8	1.0	1.3
Oct 29, 2002	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.5
Oct 30, 2002	2.0	2.0	1.5	2.2	2.0	1.4	1.8
Oct 31, 2002	1.8	1.6	1.2	2.4	2.1	1.9	1.9
Nov 01, 2002	3.9	2.6	2.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	3.0
Nov 02, 2002	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.2	6.7	6.8	7.0
Nov 03, 2002	5.6	5.2	5.8	5.4	6.2	6.2	5.7
Nov 04, 2002	1.9	1.4	1.7	2.3	2.2	1.6	1.8

Date <sup>a</sup>	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Nov 06, 2002	2.1	1.7	2.4	2.0	2.3	1.7	2.0
Nov 07, 2002	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.3	3.0	2.0	2.3
Nov 08, 2002	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.3	3.8	3.4	3.3
Nov 09, 2002	5.7	6.6	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.4
Nov 10, 2002	4.7	5.1	4.7	5.3	5.5	5.0	5.1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup>Boldfaced dates represent weekends.

## Weekday of hunting. (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Sunday	26.7	27.7	27.1	26.0	26.7	28.4	27.2
Monday	6.8	6.1	6.1	7.6	7.7	5.7	6.5
Tuesday	6.0	6.2	6.7	7.1	6.0	5.8	6.3
Wednesday	8.1	7.0	8.4	8.1	7.4	6.2	7.4
Thursday	8.4	7.3	7.4	8.2	8.0	7.6	7.8
Friday	12.1	11.6	10.5	11.7	12.3	12.2	11.8
Saturday	31.9	34.2	33.8	31.3	31.8	34.1	33.0

## 5. Did you harvest a turkey this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	25.0	25.3	31.0	25.9	29.3	27.5	27.1
No	75.0	74.8	70.0	74.1	70.7	72.5	72.9

## If yes, how many? (Frequency)

Number of Turkeys	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
1	72	121	106	106	65	178	648
2	4	5	6	37	2	32	86

## 5a. Approximately how many hours did it take to kill a turkey?

Hours	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
<1	1.4	2.5	0.0	0.0	1.6	1.5	1.2
1-3	34.3	35.6	38.1	35.2	36.5	33.5	35.2
4-6	20.0	21.2	21.0	22.7	15.9	23.5	21.5
7-10	12.9	14.4	14.3	10.2	12.7	15.0	13.5
>10	31.4	26.3	26.7	31.3	33.3	26.5	28.5

6. Did you hit a turkey that you were unable to retrieve? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	2.5	2.0	2.8	4.4	6.2	2.6	3.1
No	96.4	97.6	96.3	94.6	93.8	96.6	96.1

If yes, how many? (Frequency)

Number of Turkeys	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
1	6	7	7	17	11	14	62
2	0	0	0	4	0	2	6
>2	0	0	1	2	0	4	7

7. What type of weapon did you use most while hunting turkeys this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Gun	82.5	83.5	84.1	81.6	81.4	85.2	83.4
Bow	17.6	16.5	15.6	18.3	18.6	14.8	16.5

What type of weapon did you use to kill a turkey this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Gun	93.2	96.8	95.5	96.6	92.5	97.7	96.1
Bow	6.8	3.2	4.5	3.4	7.5	2.3	3.9

8. Which of the following methods did you use most when hunting turkeys? (Percent)

Method	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Scatter a flock and called a bird back	6.0	2.5	4.7	4.8	5.2	5.8	4.8
Called a bird without scattering a flock	11.0	11.2	7.6	9.6	10.1	10.7	10.1
Ambush from concealment	31.6	36.2	35.4	29.6	36.3	30.1	32.5
Still hunt, stalking	29.8	31.7	30.5	30.4	28.5	32.4	31.0
Drives	1.6	1.3	2.0	5.5	1.5	5.9	3.6
Shoot from the roost	1.3	8.0	0.2	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.1
Incidental to archery hunting	15.1	13.1	13.5	15.0	14.6	11.2	13.4
Incidental to small game hunting	3.1	2.5	4.7	2.8	1.9	1.7	2.7
Incidental to other hunting	0.5	0.7	1.4	0.9	0.4	1.0	8.0

9. How many turkeys did you see while you were afield hunting turkeys? Do not include turkeys sighted from a vehicle. (Mean)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Mean	31.3	21.3	31.4	32.4	24.1	24.1	27.1

10. While you were afield this fall, did the presence of other hunters interfere with your turkey hunting? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	12.3	12.5	11.9	9.7	12.0	12.0	11.6
No	87.7	87.5	87.8	90.2	88.1	87.9	88.3

• If yes, what were the other hunters hunting? (Percent)

Hunting	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Archery Deer	40.0	30.7	33.3	38.3	27.0	21.9	30.6
Small Game	25.5	19.3	26.7	17.3	32.4	19.7	21.8
Turkeys	20.0	22.7	10.0	22.2	13.5	18.3	18.6
Gun Deer	3.6	12.5	10.0	2.5	10.8	27.0	13.5
Unknown	10.9	14.8	20.0	19.8	16.2	13.1	15.5

- 11. For each statement below, please check the response which best reflects your 2002 fall hunt.
- Other hunters sometimes kept me from hunting where I wanted to.

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Definitely Yes	5.0	3.5	5.6	3.9	4.0	5.1	4.5
Somewhat	8.3	9.4	7.8	7.7	8.9	7.4	8.1
Not Much	21.3	19.1	20.1	18.5	20.9	17.7	19.1
No Never	65.3	68.0	66.6	70.0	66.2	69.8	68.3

• There was too much competition from other hunters where I hunted.

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Definitely Yes	2.4	2.7	8.0	2.2	2.2	2.6	2.2
Somewhat	5.7	5.3	6.5	6.0	4.5	5.1	5.5
Not Much	22.6	21.6	23.3	18.5	22.9	23.0	21.8
No Never	69.3	70.5	69.4	73.3	70.4	69.3	70.4

• Other hunters interfered with my chance to bag a bird.

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Definitely Yes	2.7	3.5	3.1	2.2	2.7	3.2	2.9
Somewhat	5.7	5.1	5.9	6.8	6.3	5.1	5.7
Not Much	16.5	15.5	18.0	11.0	14.4	15.7	15.0
No Never	75.1	75.9	73.0	80.1	76.7	76.0	76.4

12. Overall, how would you rate the quality of your Wisconsin fall wild turkey hunt this year? (Percent)

Rating	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Very High	11.7	13.2	14.0	16.6	19.8	15.2	15.0
Fairly High	17.5	17.6	22.4	17.3	21.6	18.0	18.6
Average	52.4	45.8	44.8	44.9	42.3	44.9	45.7
Fairly Low	12.4	15.2	12.0	14.7	11.0	15.1	14.0
Very Low	6.0	8.3	6.7	6.6	5.3	6.8	6.8

13. Please rate the factors that most influence your perception of a "quality" fall turkey hunt. Enter a value of 1 to 7 next to each statement, with "1" having the most effect and "7" having the least effect on you hunting experience. (Mean response)

Factor	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
An Opportunity to kill a turkey	2.9	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.0
Seeing turkeys	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.4	2.5
Killing a mature Tom	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1
Killing a turkey (either sex)	3.8	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Weather	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.3
Not seeing other hunters	4.2	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0
Spending time with friends and family	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.4	3.9	3.1	3.4

14. Would you like to see the number of permits available for the zone you hunted changed? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Increased	40.6	31.5	50.3	36.0	49.6	27.1	36.3
Stay the Same	56.1	64.0	48.6	62.4	48.7	69.3	60.9
Decreased	3.3	4.5	1.1	1.6	1.7	3.4	2.8

15. Do you feel that the turkey numbers have changed from last year in the zone you hunted this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Increased	33.5	24.6	42.2	32.7	45.6	20.0	30.1
Stay the Same	37.2	45.0	39.1	43.0	36.7	49.7	43.6
Decreased	23.0	24.8	13.1	19.5	11.5	25.0	20.9
Did not hunt same zone	6.4	5.6	5.6	4.9	6.2	5.1	5.5

16. Rate your overall satisfaction with the Wisconsin Wild Turkey Program. (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Very Satisfied	36.9	44.1	46.1	46.6	46.5	48.8	45.6
Somewhat Satisfied	16.6	17.8	17.9	12.9	14.2	16.7	16.1
Satisfied	38.5	30.4	27.1	31.3	31.4	27.7	30.4
Somewhat Dissatisfied	7.6	5.9	7.3	6.4	7.1	5.4	6.3
Very Dissatisfied	0.3	1.8	1.7	2.6	0.9	1.5	1.6

State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

#### Wisconsin Fall Turkey Hunting Questionnaire

Section 23.09(2)(k), Wis. Stats. Form 2300-203 (R 10/02)

Dear Turkey Hunter:

Please take a few moments to complete this survey. Questionnaires are important as a tool in providing information necessary to set permit levels and manage Wisconsin's turkeys in the best possible manner. This is an opportunity for us to receive your input so we can better serve you, the customer. Your name was selected from a list of fall turkey hunters to participate in this year's survey. Even if you didn't harvest a turkey or were unable to get out hunting this fall, your input is needed. Report on yourself only, not on your hunting party or family members. Completion of this survey is voluntary. All information that is provided will remain confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

When finished, reverse the flap on the questionnaire, tape the edge, and mail. Although postage is not required to return this questionnaire, placing a stamp in the upper right-hand corner will allow more dollars to be put into habitat management and maintenance, to ensure the future of Wisconsin's wild turkeys.

Thank you for taking the time to be a part of Wisconsin's successful wild turkey program.

Sincerely,						
Keith Warnke Upland Ecologist Bureau of Wildlife Management	2. How many years of fall turkey hunting experience do you					
Have you ever attended a turkey hunter education clinic sponsored by the Wisconsin DNR and/or the National Wild Turkey Federation?  Yes No	have? (Please check one.) 0-5 6-10 11-15 16-  3. Did you hunt turkeys this fall? Yes No					
IE VOIL DID NOT HUNT DI EASE STOD H	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,					
IF YOU DID NOT HUNT, PLEASE STOP HERE AND RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.  4. Please check all the days that you hunted for turkeys this fall:						
Saturday, Oct. 12 Sunday, Oct. 20 Sunday, Oct. 13 Monday, Oct. 21 Tuesday, Oct. 14 Tuesday, Oct. 22 Wednesday, Oct. 15 Wednesday, Oct. 23 Thursday, Oct. 16 Thursday, Oct. 24 Thursday, Oct. 17 Friday, Oct. 25 Saturday, Oct. 18 Saturday, Oct. 26 Saturday, Oct. 19 Sunday, Oct. 27	Monday, Oct. 28 Tuesday, Nov. 5   Tuesday, Oct. 29 Wednesday, Nov. 6   Wednesday, Oct. 30 Thursday, Nov. 7   Thursday, Oct. 31 Friday, Nov. 8   Friday, Nov. 1 Saturday, Nov. 9   Saturday, Nov. 2 Sunday, Nov. 10   Sunday, Nov. 3 Monday, Nov. 4					
5. Did you harvest a turkey this fall?  Yes No If yes, how many?  5a. Approximately how many hours did it take to kill a turkey?  6. Did you hit a turkey that you were unable to retrieve?  Yes No If yes, how many?  7. What type of weapon did you use most while hunting turkeys this fall?  Gun Bow  What type of weapon did you use to kill a turkey this fall?	8. Which of the following methods did you use most when hunting turkeys? (Please check one.)  Scattered a flock and called a bird back Called a bird without scattering a flock Ambush from concealment Still hunt, stalking Drives Shoot from the roost Incidental to other hunting: Bow deer Small game Other If another method, please explain:					

Figure 1. 2002 Fall Turkey Hunting Questionnaire.

Figure 1. Continued.

State of Wisconsin



Figure 2. Turkey Regions.